by Dylan Horrocks

Pickle

№ 4

FOR MATURE READERS

HANDCRAFTED IN HICKSVILLE, NEW ZEALAND

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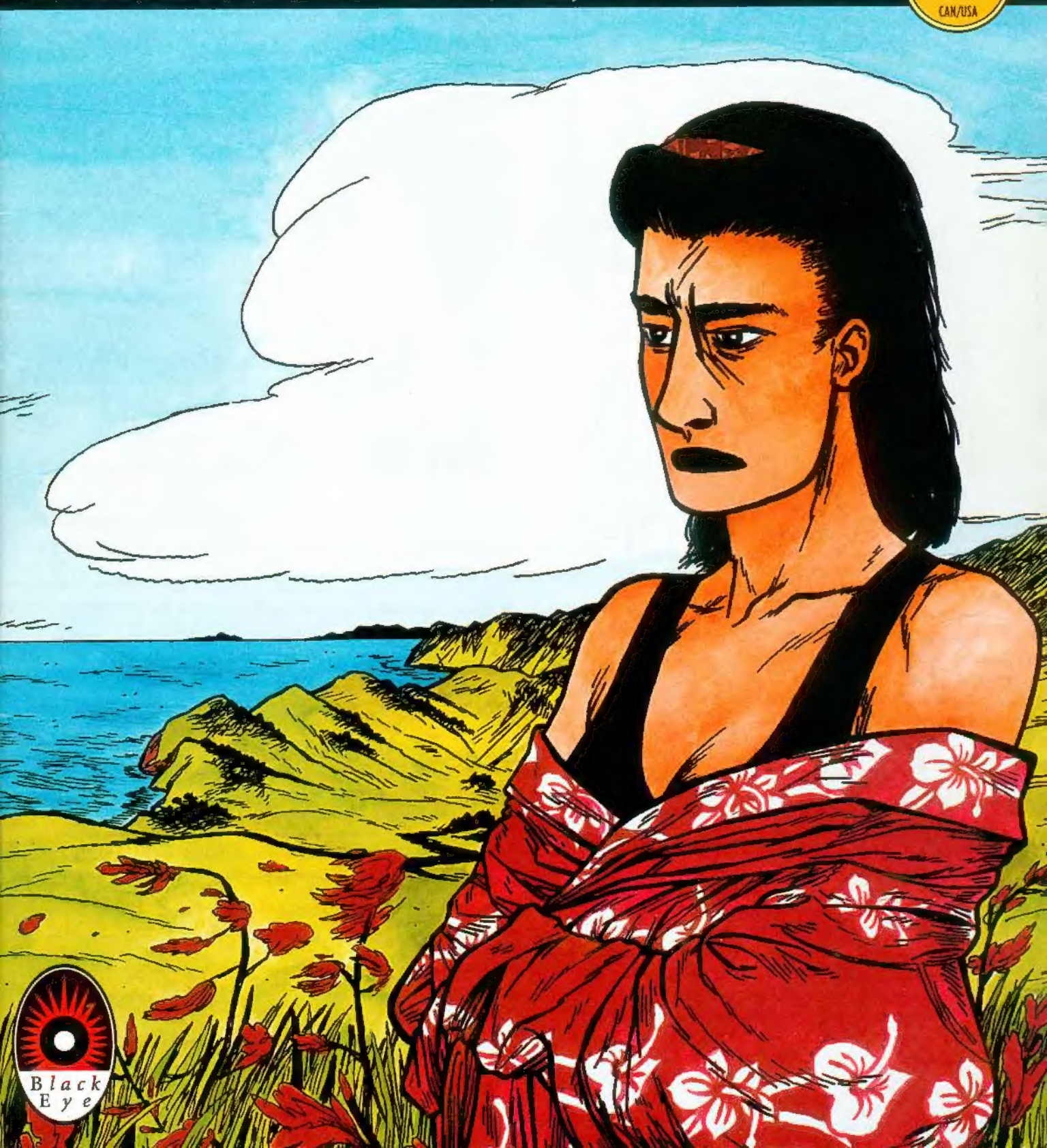

Black Eye

Pickle

Nº 4, APRIL 1994

by **Dylan Horrocks**
editor **Dolan Hicks (mrs.)**
publisher **Michel Vrána**
promotion **Rob Veri**

Publication Design
by **Dylan Horrocks and Michel Vrána**

"I've seen recent examples of super-heroes being pushed around and made fun of and I don't go along with it. Nobody ever pushed me around in those serials. The world needs heroes today"

—Kirk Alyn, star of *Superman* (1948) and *Atom Man vs. Superman* (1952)

Black Eye

PICKLE #4, April 1994, Published quarterly by Black Eye Productions, 338 Kribs Street, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada N3C 3J3, voice/fax (519) 658-0416.

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'Captain Cook's Comic Cuts' first appeared in *Le Roquet* #3. Thanks to Les Cartoonistes Dangereuses for letting us reprint it. Write to Brad! Brooks at 48 Barnstaple Rd., Harold Hill, Romford, RM37TH England, for back issues and subscription info on this fine magazine, available in English or French.

PRINTED IN CANADA

Letter from Hicksville:

Well, dear readers, I'm afraid I'm a little lost for words this time! Ever since seeing myself on page 5 of this issue, I've been feeling rather — well — shy. So I've asked our postie Harry to look after the letters section of this issue and I must say I think he brings a rather professional touch to the job.

I hope you all survived winter up there in Canada and the United States. Down here in Hicksville, we're just starting to get a proper winter ourselves, although of course it's nothing like what you've just had — only a bit of rain and wind really. Even so, it's just the sort of weather to put one's feet up with a nice hot pot of Russian Caravan tea and a few fresh new comics to read. So now I'll leave you to do just that!

I remain fondly yours,

Dolan Hicks

Dolan Hicks (Mrs.)

Dear Mrs. Hicks...

Hello all! Harry here. Mrs. Hicks has asked me to stand in for her this issue on account of her feeling all shy after her comic book debut and what with my extensive experience with things postal! So here goes! First letter please:

Dear Dylan,

I love *Pickle*! Picked it up yesterday along with *Dirty Plotte* and *Peepshow* and thought it was the best of the three. Well, you know, Julie and Joe are brilliant, but *Pickle* was such an unexpected treat. In fact, last night when I was reading it, I had to put it down to do something else for a while. I was enjoying it so much I didn't want to rush right through it. I got up and did the dishes and stuff. Later, when I got back to it, I gobbled it up a couple times over...

Eric Searleman
Phoenix, Arizona

Eric's mini-comic Phenieribé *makes us here in Hicksville feel the same way. Order it now from: Eric Searleman, 350 Hazelwood, Phoenix, AZ 85013.*

(more letters on page 22)

Special thanks to: Terry, Michel, Roger & Shirley, David, Cornelius, Peter Rees, Lars Cawley, Jonathan King, Jay Stephens, Thom Powers. Dedicated to Gran.

THE NULLIFIER REJOICES - A TERRIFYING SPECTACLE!!
WITH CAPTAIN TOMORROW VANQUISHED, I AM NOW ALONE IN WIELDING THE SUPREME POWER OF EMON-PI !!
INDEED IT IS SO, PROPHESIED ONE! WE HAVE KEPT OUR PART OF THE BARGAIN, NOW WE TRUST YOU WILL REMEMBER YOURS!
I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN! THE TIME HAS COME TO FULFIL MY DESTINY...
THE EXTINCTION OF ALL HUMANKIND!!!
MR. BURGER, AT 30 YEARS OF AGE, YOU ARE WIDELY SEEN AS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL COMIC BOOK ARTIST OF YOUR GENERATION. YOUR CAPTAIN TOMORROW SERIES AND YOUR VARIOUS GRAPHIC NOVELS HAVE SOLD IN THE MILLIONS AND HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO 7 LANGUAGES, EARNING YOU THE EPITHET OF "THE SUCCESSOR TO STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY."
UNNH... HAVE TO...
TO HAVE HELD THE MIGHT OF EMON-PI...
...TO HAVE FELT THE SURGING THROB OF OMNIPOTENCE...
AAAAAAAAA
...TO HAVE BEEN A GOD...
...AND LOST IT...
HOW FAR A MAN CAN FALL!!

FIVE YEARS AGO YOU GAINED A CONTROLLING INTEREST IN THE PUBLISHER THAT HAD FIRST DISCOVERED YOU - ETERNAL COMICS. SINCE THEN, YOU HAVE OVERSEEN ITS EXPANSION INTO AN ENTERTAINMENT EMPIRE TO RIVAL THE TIME-WARNER GROUP.
FORBES MAGAZINE HAS ESTIMATED YOUR NETT PERSONAL WORTH AT 20 MILLION DOLLARS. YET YOUR STORY BEGAN IN A SMALL TOWN IN A TINY COUNTRY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC. LET'S START THERE, THEN ...THE ORIGIN OF DICK BURGER!
TELL ME ABOUT YOUR HOMETOWN.
YOUR HOMETOWN. WHAT WAS IT CALLED?
WHAT?
er...
HICKSVILLE.
RIGHT. HICKSVILLE, NEW ZEALAND. SO TELL ME ABOUT HICKSVILLE...
Yeah - Sure - Uh huh
AheM
THERE'S REALLY NOTHING TO TELL.
WHAT DO PEOPLE THERE DO? FARMING? INDUSTRY?
Uh...
LEONARD, I'M PRETTY SURE NO-ONE WILL WANT TO KNOW ABOUT A SMALL TOWN IN THE ASS-END OF NOWHERE.

ON THE CONTRARY. A LOT OF PEOPLE WONDER ABOUT THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF A GREAT ARTIST, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU GREW UP IN SUCH ISOLATION. I MEAN, I GUESS THERE ISN'T MUCH OF A COMICS SCENE IN HICKSVILLE..?
...
LOOK, MR. BATTS, JUST FORGET ABOUT HICKSVILLE, OKAY? THERE IS NOTHING INTERESTING ABOUT HICKSVILLE. WE'RE NOT GOING TO TALK ABOUT IT.
NOW, I SUGGEST WE START THIS INTERVIEW OVER.

HEY YOU!!
YEAH-YOU!! I'M TALKING TO YOU! WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON?!
YOU HEAR ME?! WHAT IS IT WITH ALL THIS WEIRD SHIT?! EXPLAIN YOURSELF!!!
I'M SICK OF IT! COME DOWN HERE!!
...
GROFF
ROWF
GEDDIM BOY!
HMPH! BLIGHTER TOOK A DIVE!
GRRR
FANG!

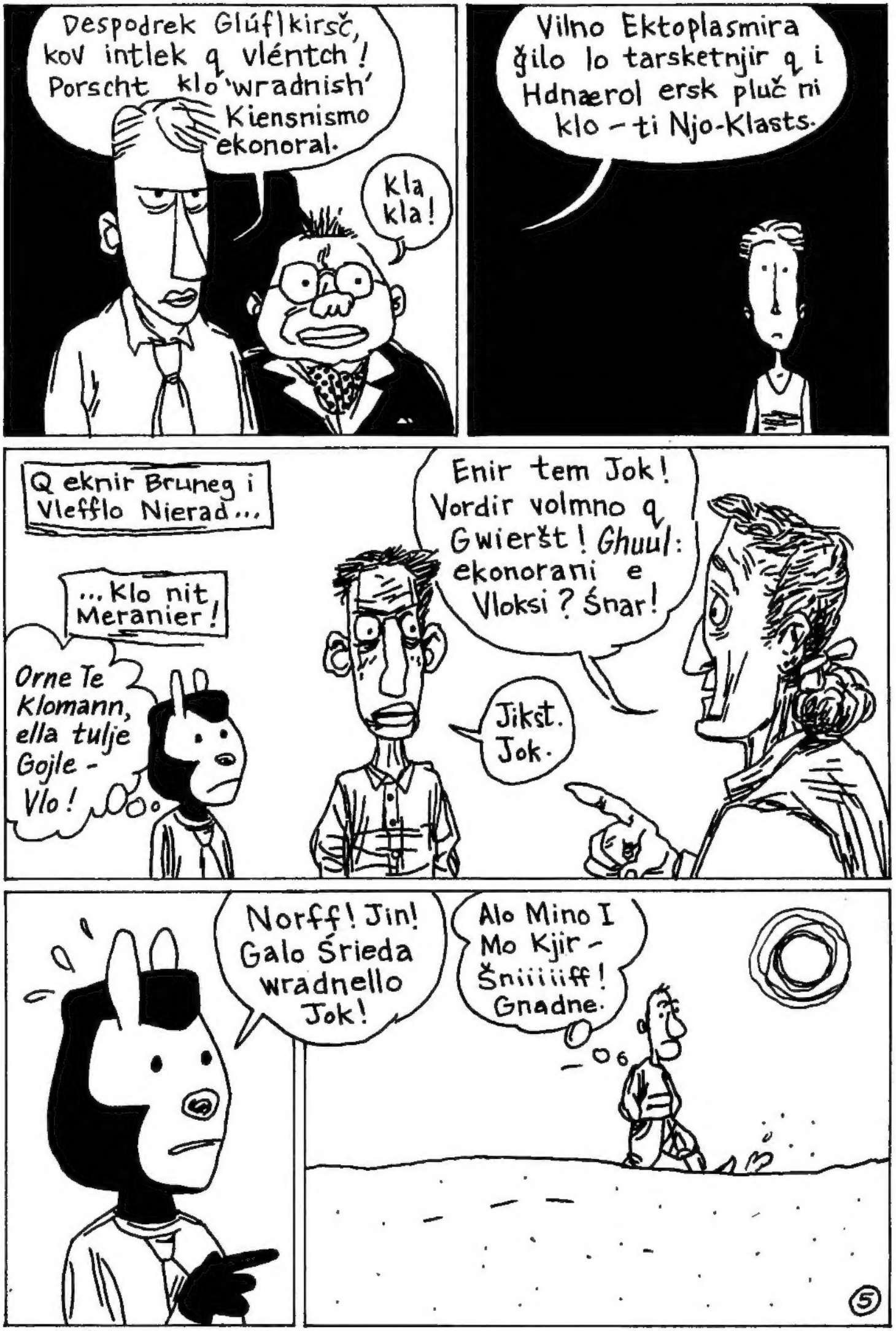
Hicksville

WHAT THE FUCK?

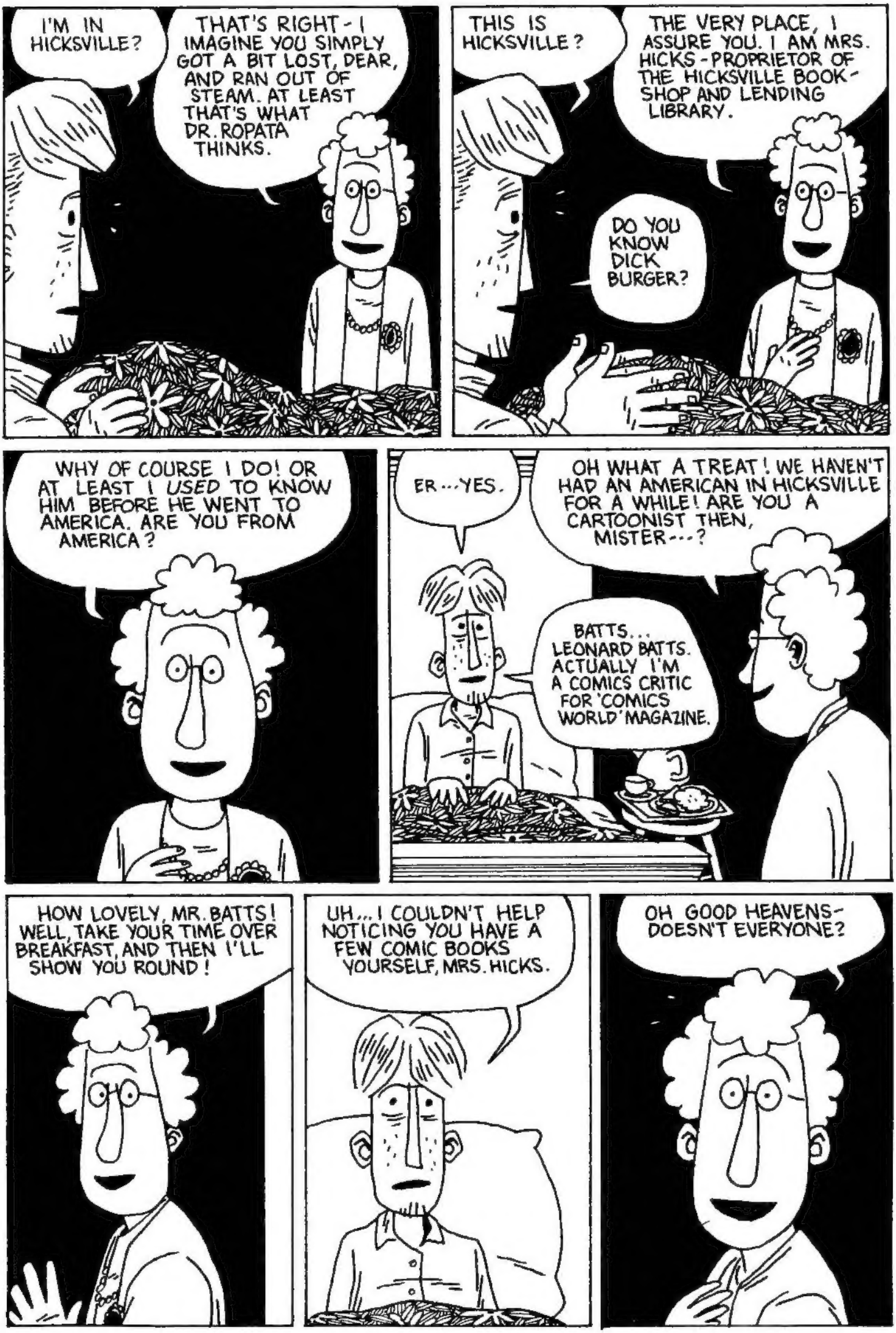
KOMEK

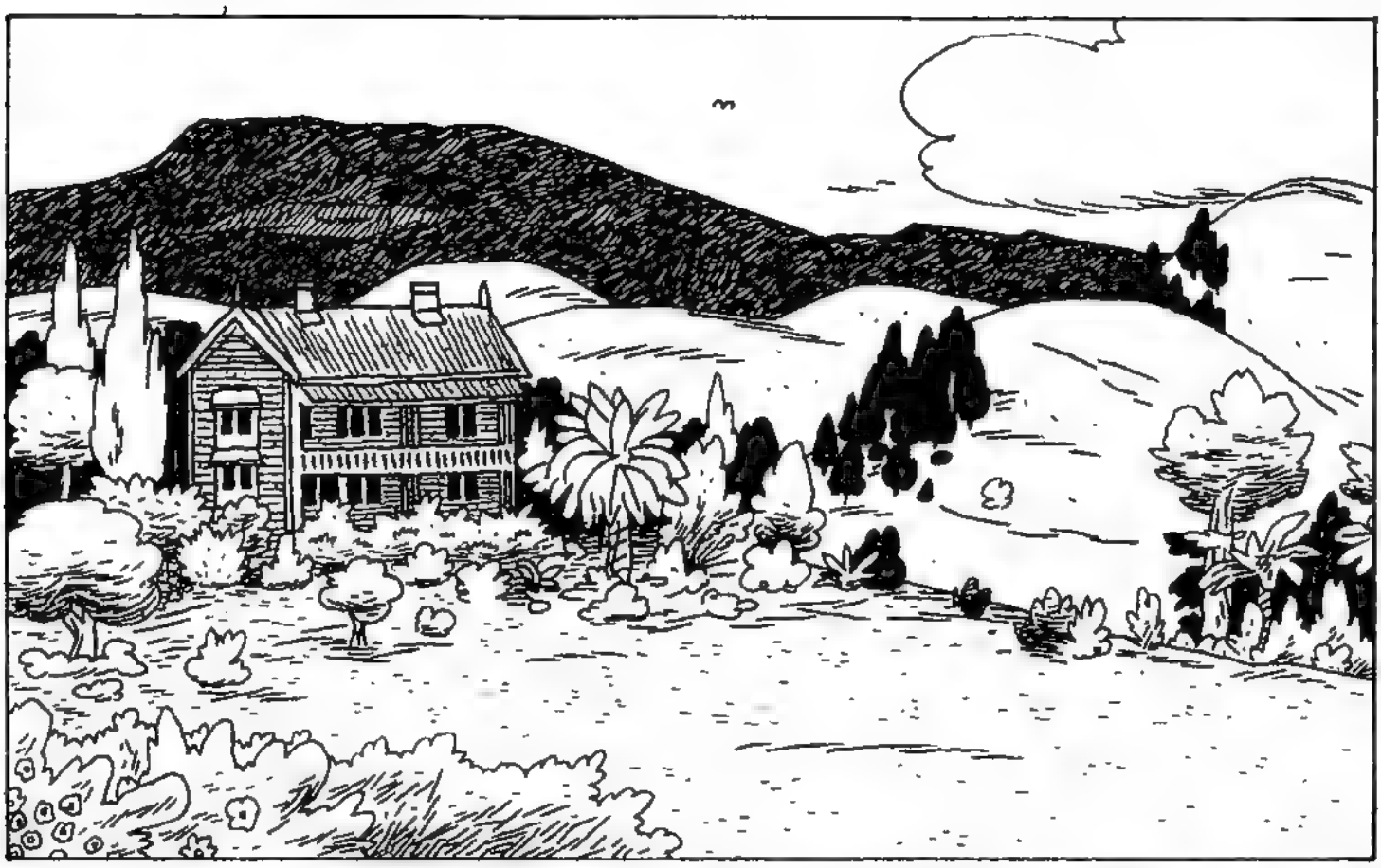
29
INT KOMEK:
?

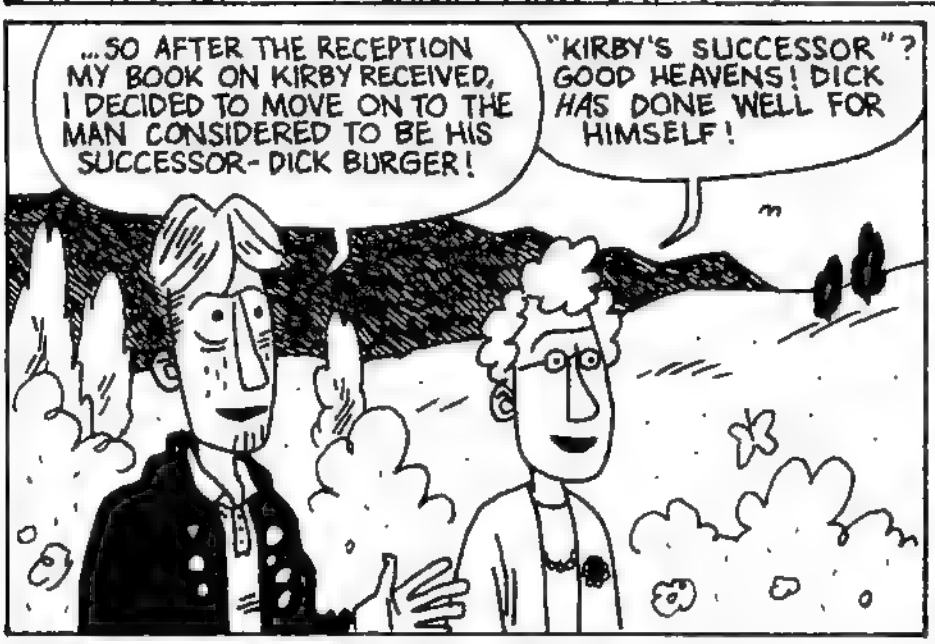
KOMEK


Despodrek Glúflkirsč, kov intlek q vléntch! Porscht klo 'wradnish' Kiensnismo ekonoral.
Kla kla!
Vilno Ektoplasmira ğilo lo tarsketnjir q i Hdnærol ersk pluč ni klo-ti Njo-Klasts.
Q eknir Bruneg i Vlefflo Nierad...
...klo nit Meranier!
Orne Te Klomann, ella tulje Gojle-Vlo!
Enir tem Jok! Vordir volmno q Gwieršt! Ghuul: ekonorani e Vloksi? Śnar!
Jikst. Jok.
Norff! Jin! Galo Śrieda wradnello Jok!
Alo Mino I Mo Kjir-Śniiiiiff! Gnadne.
5

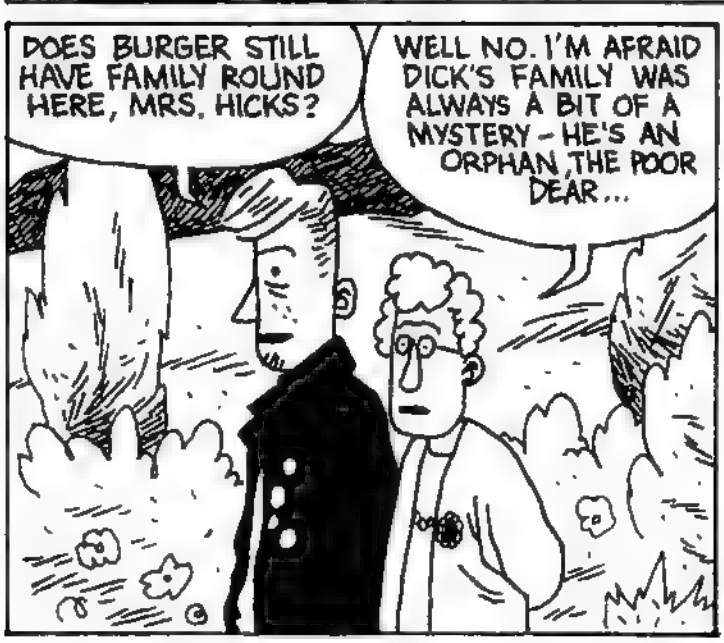
KNOCK KNOCK
er... HELLO?
GOOD MORNING, DEAR! I HEARD A BIT OF NOISE, SO I THOUGHT YOU MUST BE AWAKE.
ER...
I DO HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ASSAM FIRST THING IN THE MORNING, ONLY I'VE RUN OUT OF BREAKFAST TEAS ENTIRELY. STILL - I'VE MADE IT A BIT WEAKER THAN USUAL.
EXCUSE ME, BUT ...
OH OF COURSE, SILLY ME! YOU WON'T HAVE THE FAINTEST IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON - YOU'VE BEEN OUT LIKE A LIGHT SINCE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, POOR THING!
WHERE AM I?
HICKSVILLE, OF COURSE, DEAR! FARMER DOBBS FOUND YOU LYING IN ONE OF HIS FIELDS, DEAD TO THE WORLD. MIND YOU, IT'S A GOOD THING HE DIDN'T TAKE YOU FOR A RABBIT, OR YOU MIGHT HAVE ENDED UP A GOOD DEAL MORE DEAD THAN THAT!

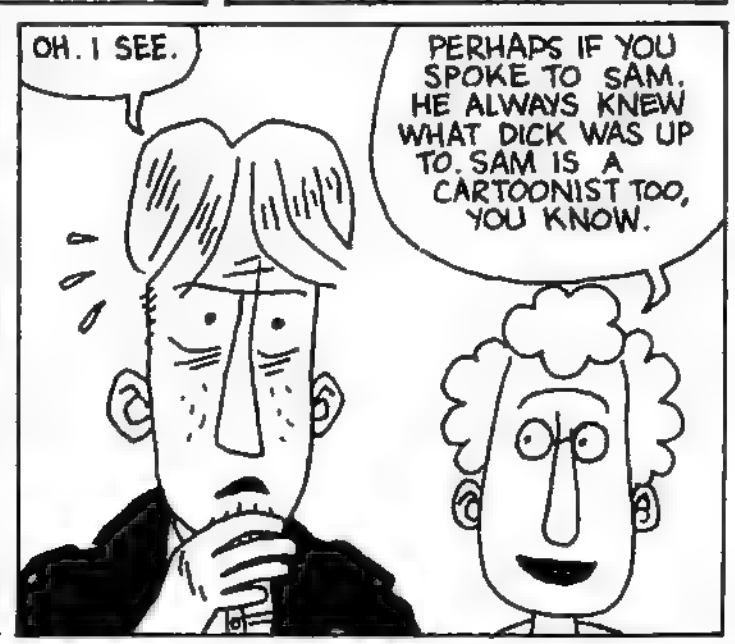

I'M IN HICKSVILLE?
THAT'S RIGHT - I IMAGINE YOU SIMPLY GOT A BIT LOST, DEAR, AND RAN OUT OF STEAM. AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT DR. ROPATA THINKS.
THIS IS HICKSVILLE?
THE VERY PLACE, I ASSURE YOU. I AM MRS. HICKS - PROPRIETOR OF THE HICKSVILLE BOOK-SHOP AND LENDING LIBRARY.
DO YOU KNOW DICK BURGER?
WHY OF COURSE I DO! OR AT LEAST I *USED* TO KNOW HIM BEFORE HE WENT TO AMERICA. ARE YOU FROM AMERICA?
ER... YES.
OH WHAT A TREAT! WE HAVEN'T HAD AN AMERICAN IN HICKSVILLE FOR A WHILE! ARE YOU A CARTOONIST THEN, MISTER...?
BATTS... LEONARD BATTS. ACTUALLY I'M A COMICS CRITIC FOR 'COMICS WORLD' MAGAZINE.
HOW LOVELY, MR. BATTS! WELL, TAKE YOUR TIME OVER BREAKFAST, AND THEN I'LL SHOW YOU ROUND!
UH... I COULDN'T HELP NOTICING YOU HAVE A FEW COMIC BOOKS YOURSELF, MRS. HICKS.
OH GOOD HEAVENS - DOESN'T EVERYONE?

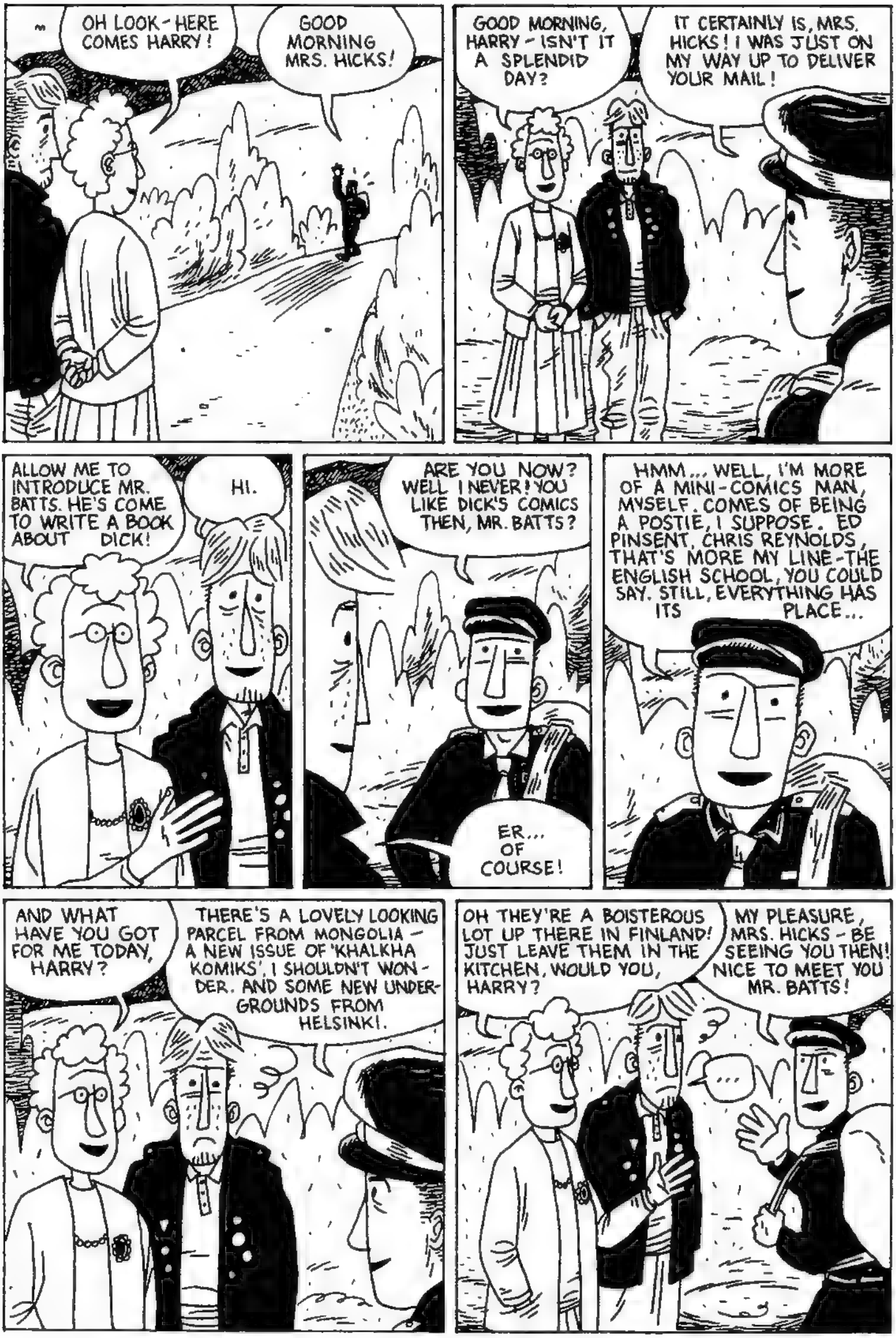



...SO AFTER THE RECEPTION MY BOOK ON KIRBY RECEIVED, I DECIDED TO MOVE ON TO THE MAN CONSIDERED TO BE HIS SUCCESSOR- DICK BURGER!
"KIRBY'S SUCCESSOR"? GOOD HEAVENS! DICK HAS DONE WELL FOR HIMSELF!

HE'S EASILY THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MAN IN COMICS TODAY!
HOW SPLENDID! MY, MY!


DOES BURGER STILL HAVE FAMILY ROUND HERE, MRS. HICKS?
WELL NO. I'M AFRAID DICK'S FAMILY WAS ALWAYS A BIT OF A MYSTERY - HE'S AN ORPHAN, THE POOR DEAR...


OH. I SEE.
PERHAPS IF YOU SPOKE TO SAM, HE ALWAYS KNEW WHAT DICK WAS UP TO. SAM IS A CARTOONIST TOO, YOU KNOW.


OH LOOK - HERE COMES HARRY!
GOOD MORNING MRS. HICKS!
GOOD MORNING, HARRY - ISN'T IT A SPLENDID DAY?
IT CERTAINLY IS, MRS. HICKS! I WAS JUST ON MY WAY UP TO DELIVER YOUR MAIL!
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MR. BATTS. HE'S COME TO WRITE A BOOK ABOUT DICK!
HI.
ARE YOU NOW? WELL I NEVER! YOU LIKE DICK'S COMICS THEN, MR. BATTS?
ER... OF COURSE!
HMM... WELL, I'M MORE OF A MINI-COMICS MAN, MYSELF. COMES OF BEING A POSTIE, I SUPPOSE. ED PINSENT, CHRIS REYNOLDS, THAT'S MORE MY LINE - THE ENGLISH SCHOOL, YOU COULD SAY. STILL, EVERYTHING HAS ITS PLACE...
AND WHAT HAVE YOU GOT FOR ME TODAY, HARRY?
THERE'S A LOVELY LOOKING PARCEL FROM MONGOLIA - A NEW ISSUE OF 'KHALKHA KOMIKS', I SHOULDN'T WONDER. AND SOME NEW UNDERGROUNDS FROM HELSINKI.
OH THEY'RE A BOISTEROUS LOT UP THERE IN FINLAND! JUST LEAVE THEM IN THE KITCHEN, WOULD YOU, HARRY?
MY PLEASURE, MRS. HICKS - BE SEEING YOU THEN! NICE TO MEET YOU MR. BATTS!
...

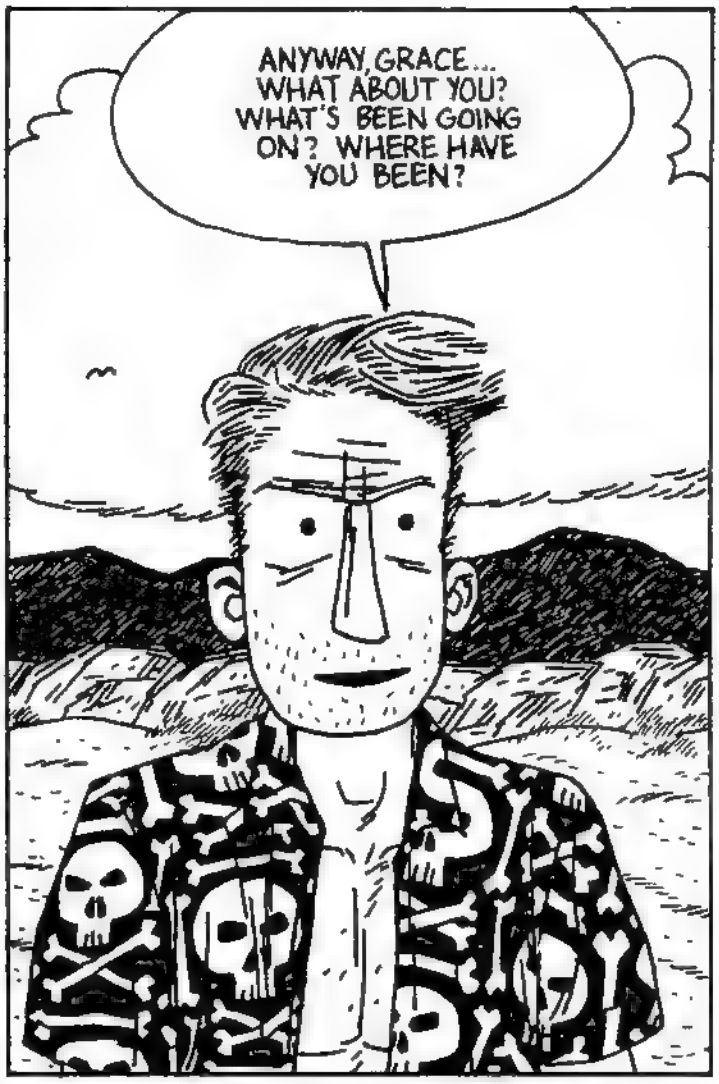
HARRY'S NEVER BEEN ONE FOR SUPERHEROES, REALLY.
OH..?
WELL-HERE IT IS...
...HICKSVILLE!

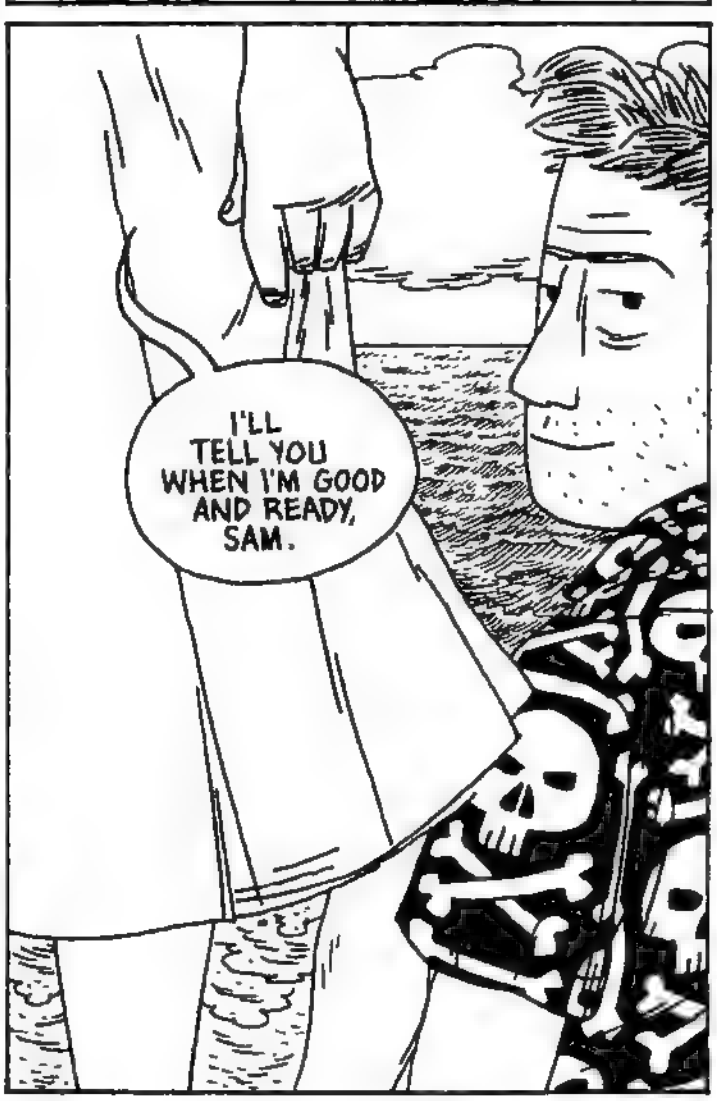
WHY DID YOU COME BACK?
MISSED MY GARDEN, I GUESS.
AND YOU?
OH, THAT'S SIMPLE. LOST MY JOB. LOST MY FLAT. RAN OUT OF MONEY. CAME HOME TO RIDE OUT THE SIX MONTH STAND-DOWN FOR THE DOLE...
...YOU HAD A JOB? WHAT-IN A BOOK-SHOP?
HELL NO!! I DREW 'MOXIE & TOXIE' FOR LAFFS MAGAZINE FOR A YEAR OR SO...

A YEAR? YOU'RE KIDDING! SAM - THAT'S ALMOST A CAREER! I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALLERGIC TO WORK!
HEY - UNEMPLOYMENT IS *MORE* THAN A CAREER. IT'S A VOCATION! IT'S A WAY OF LIFE!
WELL, IT'S NICE TO HAVE A CALLING, I GUESS.
HOW'S YOUR LOVE LIFE BEEN?
FLEETING. YOURS?
MARVELLOUS. AND COMPLETELY SOLITARY.

HOW'S TISCO?
SAME AS EVER. HIS MAGNUM OPUS JUST GETS LONGER AND LONGER, AND THE TITLE NOW CHANGES DAILY.
WHAT WAS IT, LAST YOU HEARD?
"THE PROUD PURIRI OF PERCIPIENCE."
"...A DISTURBINGLY DIALECTICAL DISTILLATION OF THIS NATION'S SOLIPSISTIC SOUL, WROUGHT FROM THE FABRIC OF OUR UNCONSCIOUS AND THE WIRY STRANDS OF A Nº 9 SABLE BRUSH..."
A Nº 9? TISCO IS GETTING DARING!
TISCO *BELIEVES* IN THE Nº 9.

HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN DRAWING THAT MASTER-PIECE?
AS LONG AS I'VE KNOWN HIM. PROBABLY AS LONG AS HE'S BEEN ALIVE! IT LOOKS GREAT – THE STUFF HE'LL LET ME SEE, THAT IS. HE STILL REFUSES TO SHOW ANYONE MORE THAN A PAGE AT A TIME. HE WON'T EVEN TALK TO PUBLISHERS!



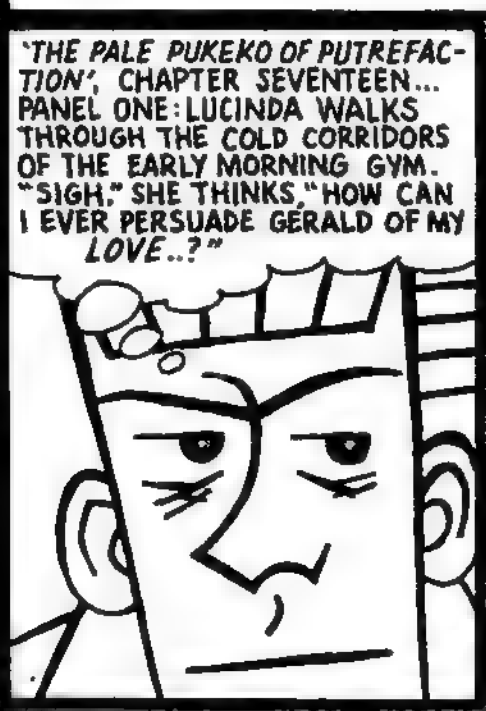


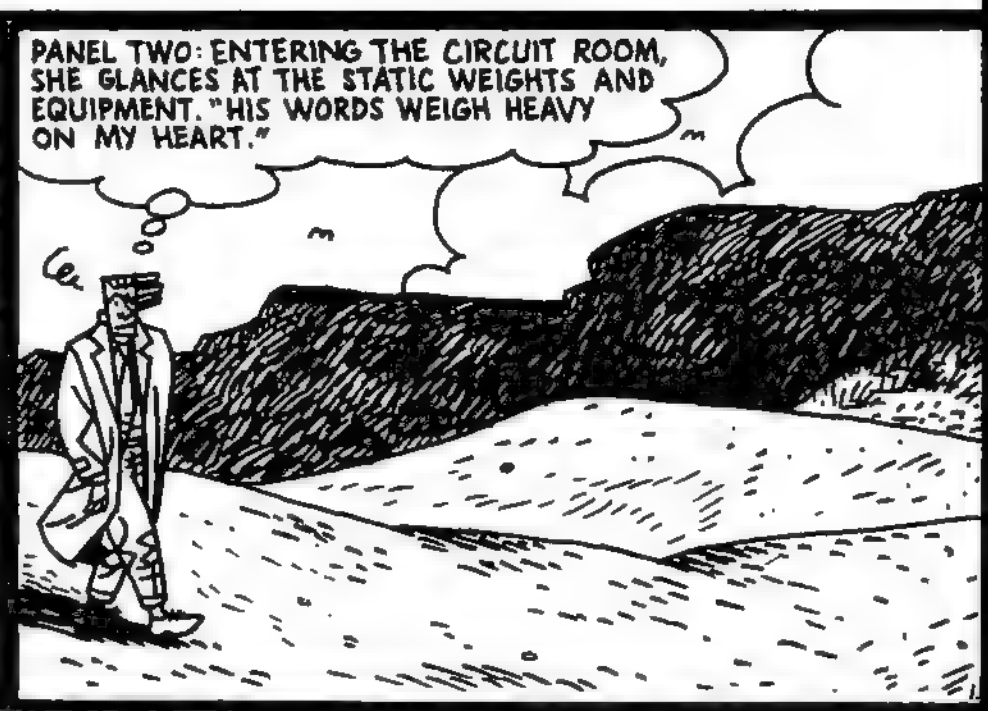
TO BE CONTINUED...

THUMBNAIL THEATRE PRESENTS:

Tisco on the beach.

BY DYLAN HORROCKS.


'THE PALE PUKEKO OF PUTREFACTION', CHAPTER SEVENTEEN... PANEL ONE: LUCINDA WALKS THROUGH THE COLD CORRIDORS OF THE EARLY MORNING GYM. "SIGH," SHE THINKS, "HOW CAN I EVER PERSUADE GERALD OF MY LOVE..?"



PANEL THREE (CLOSE-UP): LUCINDA'S TRACKSUIT FEELS CRISP AGAINST HER SKIN - COLD AND HARD, LIKE GERALD'S VOICE THAT TERRIBLE NIGHT...
SPLOSH SPLOSH
HEY LISA!!
OH BROTHER.
HOW DO YOU LIKE MY NEW TOGS? PRETTY SEXY, EH?
♪♯ OH ♪ LIIIISA... ♭♫♩.
SOMETIMES THAT IDIOT'S TOTAL INABILITY TO NOTICE WHEN HE'S NOT WANTED EXCEEDS EVEN MY EXPECTATIONS.
EH?
SPLARSH!
OH MY GOD - IT'S A JELLYFISH! URGH! IT'S DISGUSTING! OH JESUS!
YUK! YUK!

PAGE TWO, PANEL ONE: STEPHEN AND EDDIE SETTLE INTO THE SMOOTH VINYL CAFÉ SEATS AND UNPACK THEIR TRAYS. STEPHEN: "SO HOW ARE THINGS AT THE GYM?" EDDIE: "BUSINESS IS OKAY, BUT THE STAFF ARE PRETTY GRIM."
PANEL TWO: THE COFFEE IS HOT, THE DANISHES ARE SWEET, AND FROM THE CEILING COMES WORDLESS MUSIC. STEPHEN: "WHY, WHAT'S UP?" EDDIE: "OH-JUST THE USUAL. FRANK AND JILL ARE HAVING A ROW, BILL AND TINA HAVE STARTED GOING OUT-WHICH MEANS BOTH SALLY AND BOB ARE MOPING; AND AS FOR LUCINDA AND GERALD..." CEILING: "♫♩.♪𝅗𝅥♯♫♩."
PANEL THREE: (CLOSE-UP OF A ROW OF CAKES ON THE SHELVES: PINK CHERRY-TOPS, BANANA CAKES, LEAMINGTONS, MERINGUES...). THE TUNE IS THE THEME FROM THE ONEDIN LINE. CEILING: "♩.♫𝅗𝅥♩♪♩.♫♩♭"
"♪♩.♫𝅗𝅥♪♩."
THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BIGGEST STRONGEST CASTLE IN THE WHOLE WORLD.
NO-*THIS* IS GOING TO BE THE BIGGEST STRONGEST CASTLE IN THE WHOLE WORLD.
NO-THIS IS!
NO-THIS IS!
NO-THIS IS!

HEY, HEY, KIDS! LOOK-I HAVE AN IDEA!
DB
? ?
SEE-WE PUT A TOWER IN BETWEEN THE TWO CASTLES, MAKING THEM INTO ONE BIG CASTLE! THERE-NOW YOU BOTH HELPED TO MAKE THE BIGGEST STRONGEST CASTLE IN THE WHOLE WORLD! COOPERATION'S ALWAYS BEST!
SPLOSH
"♩♫♪♩♪"
"♫♩"

"♫d.♪e♫"
HEY LOOK-THERE'S TISCO! WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
HEY TISCO! TIIIIIISCOOOO!
HA! TYPICAL OLD TISCO- TOO ABSORBED IN WHAT HE'S DOING TO NOTICE ANYTHING AROUND HIM!
CRACK!
"♫e♪d.d#"

♭♫♩♪♩.○♫
LOOK-THERE'S TISCO AGAIN. WONDER WHAT HE'S DOING, ANYWAY?
WRITING.
WRITING? DOESN'T LOOK MUCH LIKE HE'S WRITING TO ME. I'M GONNA ASK HIM. BUT FIRST- LET'S GO KICK SOME SAND CASTLES OVER!
'THE PALE PUKEKO OF PULCHRITUDE', CHAPTER EIGHTEEN... PANEL ONE: GERALD TAKES LUCINDA INTO HIS MUSCULAR WEIGHTLIFTER'S ARMS. "LUCINDA MY DARLING," HE MURMURS SOFTLY, "HOW COULD YOU DOUBT THE LOVE THAT CONSUMES MY HEART? WILL YOU BE MY WIFE AND CO-MORTGAGOR? WILL YOU BEAR MY CHILDREN AND DRIVE THE SECOND CAR?" LUCINDA: "OH YES, GERALD, YES, YES..." THE COFFEE BAR FILLS WITH THE STRAINS OF 'I LOVE LUCY'...
CRUNCH!
OW!! %#! WHO FILLED THIS SAND CASTLE WITH ROCKS?!
©1992 DYLAN HORROCKS. (LONDON, NOVEMBER). TO ANNE CULHANE AND ROGER LANGRIDGE.

Dear Mrs. Hicks...

Write to: Dolan Hicks (Mrs.), c/o Pickle, P.O. Box 5512, Wellesley Street, Auckland, New Zealand

Dylan, it's good to know that there are people all over the world slaving away in obscurity to expand comics' boundaries. But too bad we're not all famous! I've got *Pickle* #2 and it's thoughtful and interesting. I've seen two panels from #3 from "How I Became Afraid of Comics" which I love [reprinted in *The Comics Journal* #165]. I've enclosed a copy of my comic *James Kochaika, Superstar* #1. Just my way of letting you know I exist.

James Kochaika
Burlington, VT

You can order James Kochaika, Superstar *#1 ($2.00) and* The Secret Origin of Deadbear Circus Detective *from James at: P.O. Box 8321, Burlington, Vermont, USA 05402-8321.*

Dear Mrs. Hicks,

Thank you one thousand times for your deft editing of Dylan Horrocks' work. People can gush all they like about that Mattotti fellow, and indeed he's very good, but for true comic strip lyricism as well as the most brain-ticklingly delightful fictional games (of author, etcetera, and just how *does Augustus E.* connect with *Hicksville*, and then again how does Kupe find himself in amongst that agglutination of several stories and who is that beautiful woman in the sports car and I think somewhere up there Calvino and Borges are very, very happy), in the end we all turn to *il maestro* Horrocks.

Bernard Caleo
Melbourne, Australia

Bernard and Brendan Tolley produce a comic called Yell Olé! *which can be ordered from: Imaginate, P.O. Box 2052, Barker, 3122, Victoria, Australia.*

Dear Dylan,

Pickle is poetic, elegant and soft.
No, wait... it's fast, meaty and flippant!
No... rooted in pop culture. A post-modern analysis of the comic book form.
Wait. Maybe it's infinitely intriguing in its introspective irreverence!
Um... a good story. Fun!
Well anyways, I know it doesn't suck.
Thank you for Pickle. We're all dazzled over here!

Sin
Guelph, Ontario

Sin is, of course, the man at the helm of the great Sin Comics *(and soon the new* Atomic City Tales*) also published by Black Eye Productions. If you don't know it already, rush out and buy one now! It's poetic, elegant and soft. No wait... it's...*

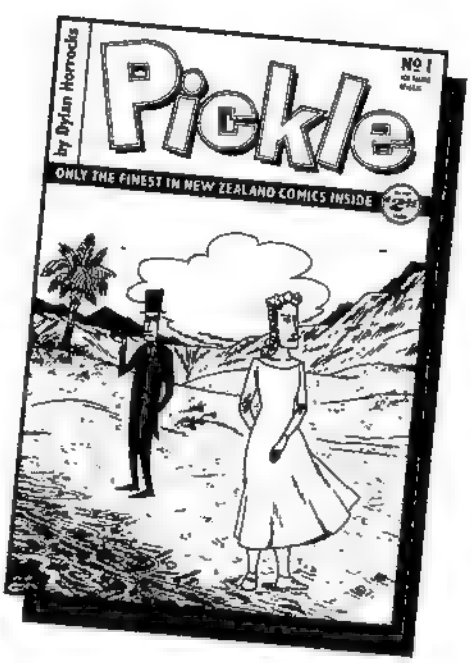
How did this happen? A rainy day in Wellington and here I am —a struggling comic artist who just made the mistake of trying to find common ground with a cute check-out girl at New World. She has just finished her degree and is about to start work for Qantas. Beautiful, educated and about to embark on a career of zooming from Auckland to China to God knows where! How did I get here?

Well, I bought *Pickle* #2 yesterday — well done, I really liked it. You're covering a lot of ground in number two, which is great. Dig those wacky men that perish!!

(continued on inside back cover)

This August...

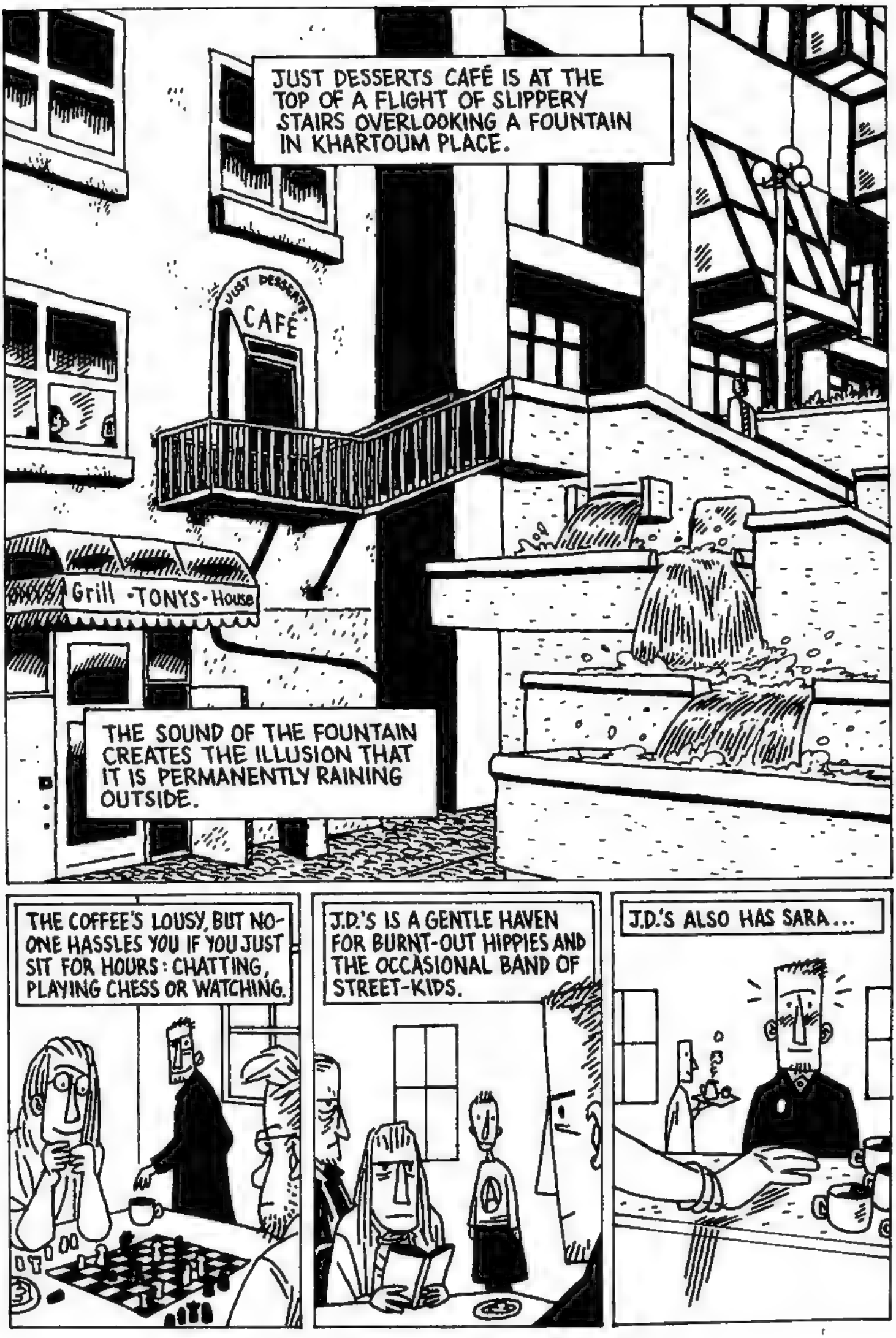
Yes, it is true... Dylan and the charming Terry will be in the United States for the San Diego Comic convention and the unveiling of the brand new reprinted issue #1 of Pickle (at right). Then it's up to sunny Ontario where they'll visit Black Eye's spacious mansion and publishing empire. All this in August 1994. Book now to have them over for dinner or to buy them drinks!



Café Underground.

Chapter Three:
Just Desserts.

THE TALE I TELL TOOK PLACE DURING THE SUMMER OF 1986. IT WAS A TIME OF END-LESS PARTIES, LATE-NIGHT CAFÉS, DESIRE AND LONGING. BUT OVERHEAD, UNSEEN BY ALL, HALLEY'S COMET FLEW EVER NEARER- AN OMEN OF DISASTER...
CHASE
BROUGHT TO YOU BY
Abe Zenas (Author)
Barney Hotere (Artist)


JUST DESSERTS CAFÉ IS AT THE TOP OF A FLIGHT OF SLIPPERY STAIRS OVERLOOKING A FOUNTAIN IN KHARTOUM PLACE.
JUST DESSERTS
CAFÉ
Grill -TONYS- House
THE SOUND OF THE FOUNTAIN CREATES THE ILLUSION THAT IT IS PERMANENTLY RAINING OUTSIDE.
THE COFFEE'S LOUSY, BUT NO-ONE HASSLES YOU IF YOU JUST SIT FOR HOURS: CHATTING, PLAYING CHESS OR WATCHING.
J.D.'S IS A GENTLE HAVEN FOR BURNT-OUT HIPPIES AND THE OCCASIONAL BAND OF STREET-KIDS.
J.D.'S ALSO HAS SARA...

BEAUTIFUL SARA, WHO IS ALWAYS SOFTLY SINGING.

SARA DANCES BEHIND THE COUNTER, BARE-FOOT, DRESSED IN FLOATING MUSLIN AND SILK.

SARA SMILES AT ME AND I MELT.

BUT SHE'S TAKEN.

SHE LIVES WITH BOB, THE SHAGGY GUITARIST, WHO BUSKS ON QUEEN STREET.

SARA SMILES AND I SIP MY FOUL COFFEE, CURSING BOB, CURSING HIS SWEET SONGS.

GEOFFREY APPEARS, IN A FOUL MOOD.

HOWDY.

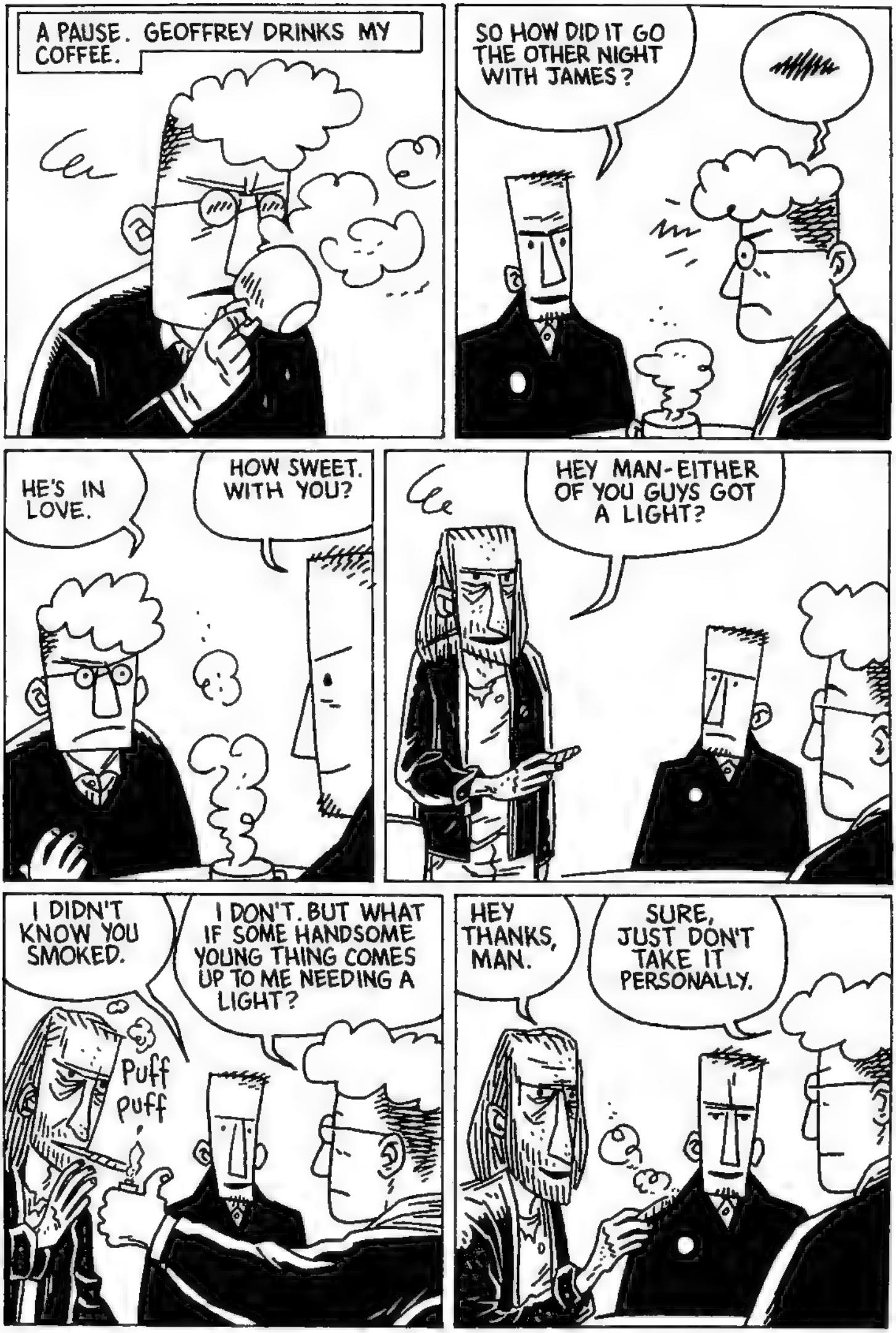
FUCK.

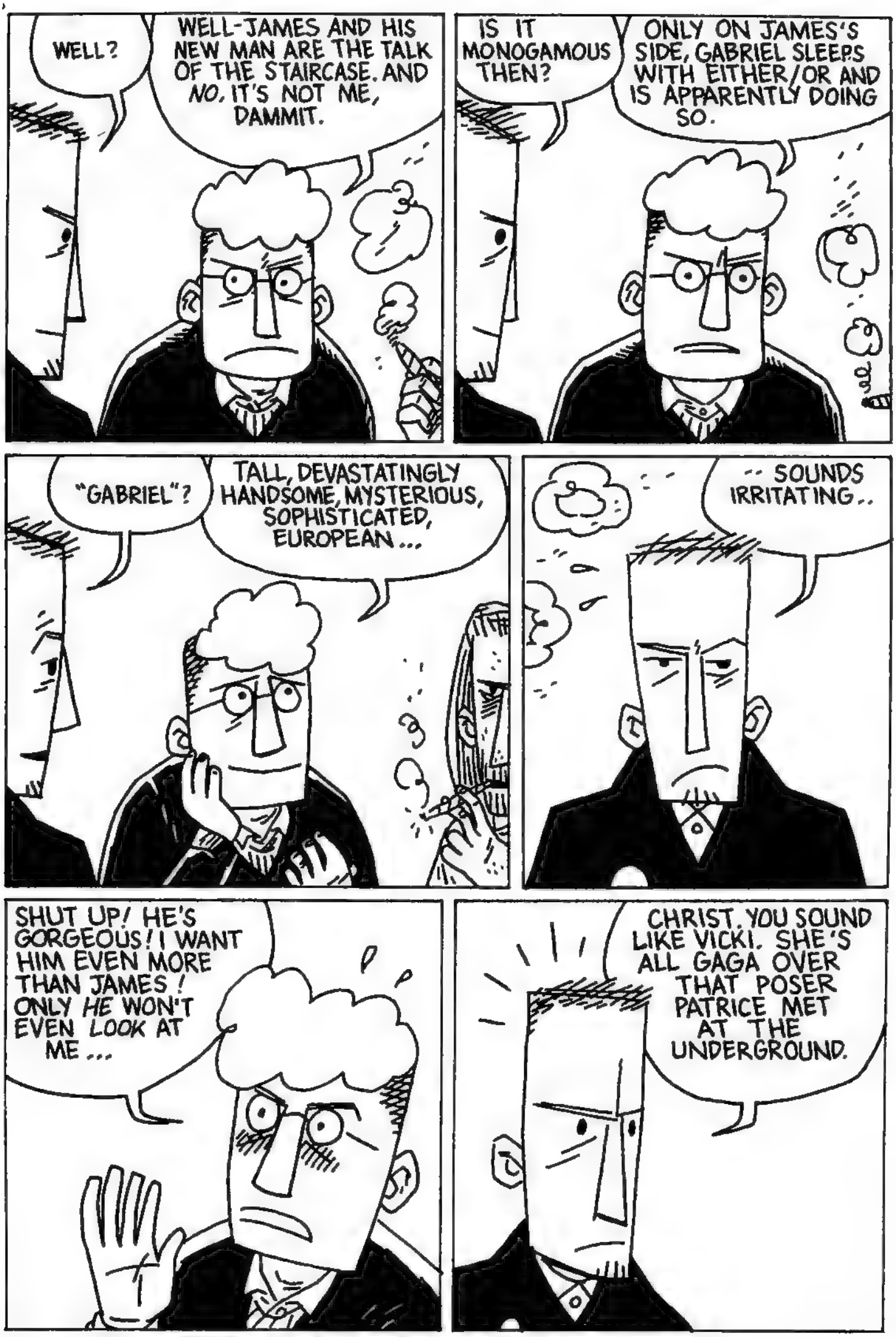
WHY SO GRIM?

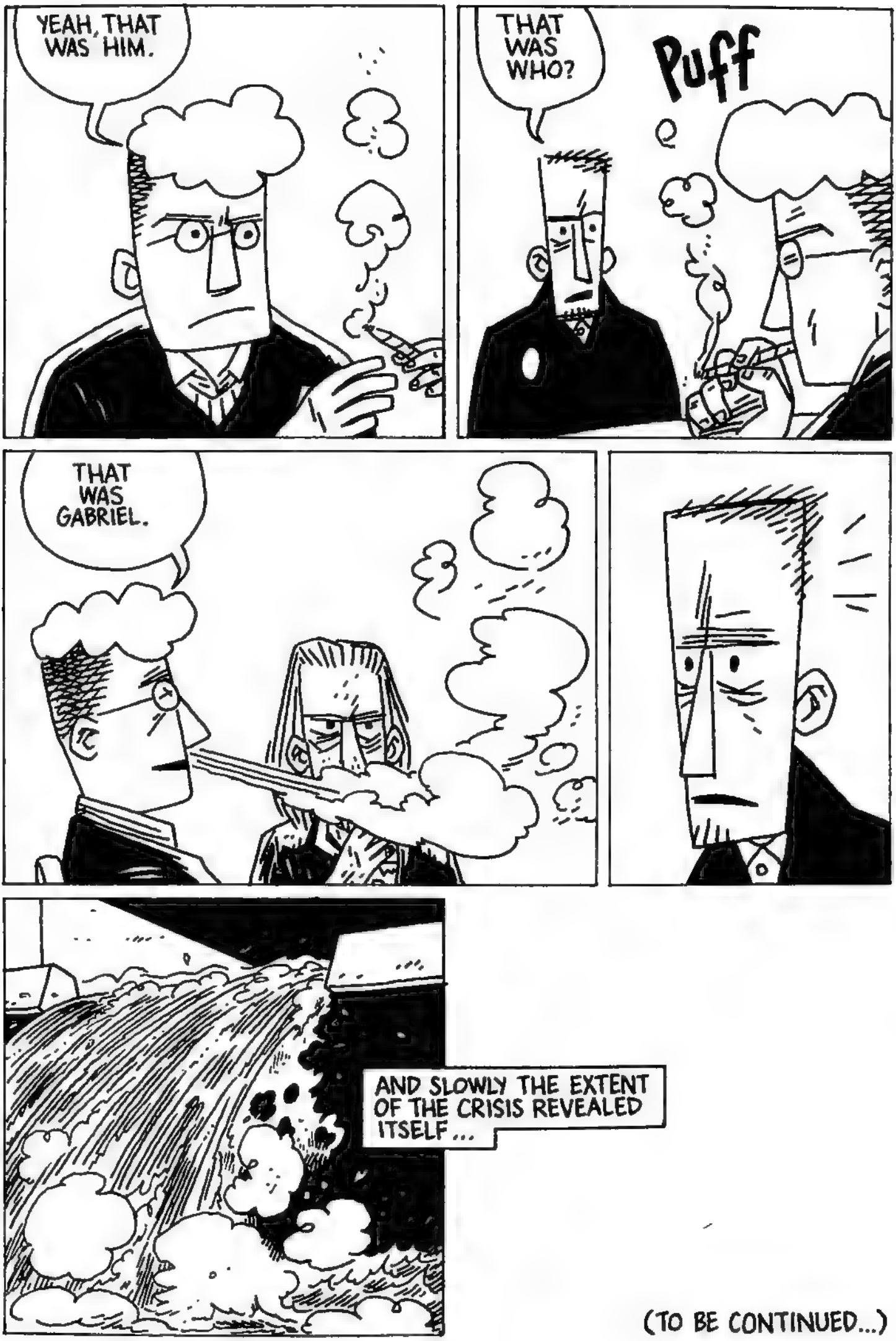
FUCK FUCK FUCK.

SO I SEE. ANYONE I KNOW?

FUCK.


A PAUSE. GEOFFREY DRINKS MY COFFEE.
SO HOW DID IT GO THE OTHER NIGHT WITH JAMES?
HE'S IN LOVE.
HOW SWEET. WITH YOU?
HEY MAN-EITHER OF YOU GUYS GOT A LIGHT?
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU SMOKED.
Puff puff
I DON'T. BUT WHAT IF SOME HANDSOME YOUNG THING COMES UP TO ME NEEDING A LIGHT?
HEY THANKS, MAN.
SURE, JUST DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY.


WELL?
WELL-JAMES AND HIS NEW MAN ARE THE TALK OF THE STAIRCASE. AND *NO*, IT'S NOT ME, DAMMIT.
IS IT MONOGAMOUS THEN?
ONLY ON JAMES'S SIDE, GABRIEL SLEEPS WITH EITHER/OR AND IS APPARENTLY DOING SO.
"GABRIEL"?
TALL, DEVASTATINGLY HANDSOME, MYSTERIOUS, SOPHISTICATED, EUROPEAN...
.. SOUNDS IRRITATING..
SHUT UP! HE'S GORGEOUS! I WANT HIM EVEN MORE THAN JAMES! ONLY *HE* WON'T EVEN *LOOK* AT ME...
CHRIST. YOU SOUND LIKE VICKI. SHE'S ALL GAGA OVER THAT POSER PATRICE MET AT THE UNDERGROUND.



(TO BE CONTINUED...)

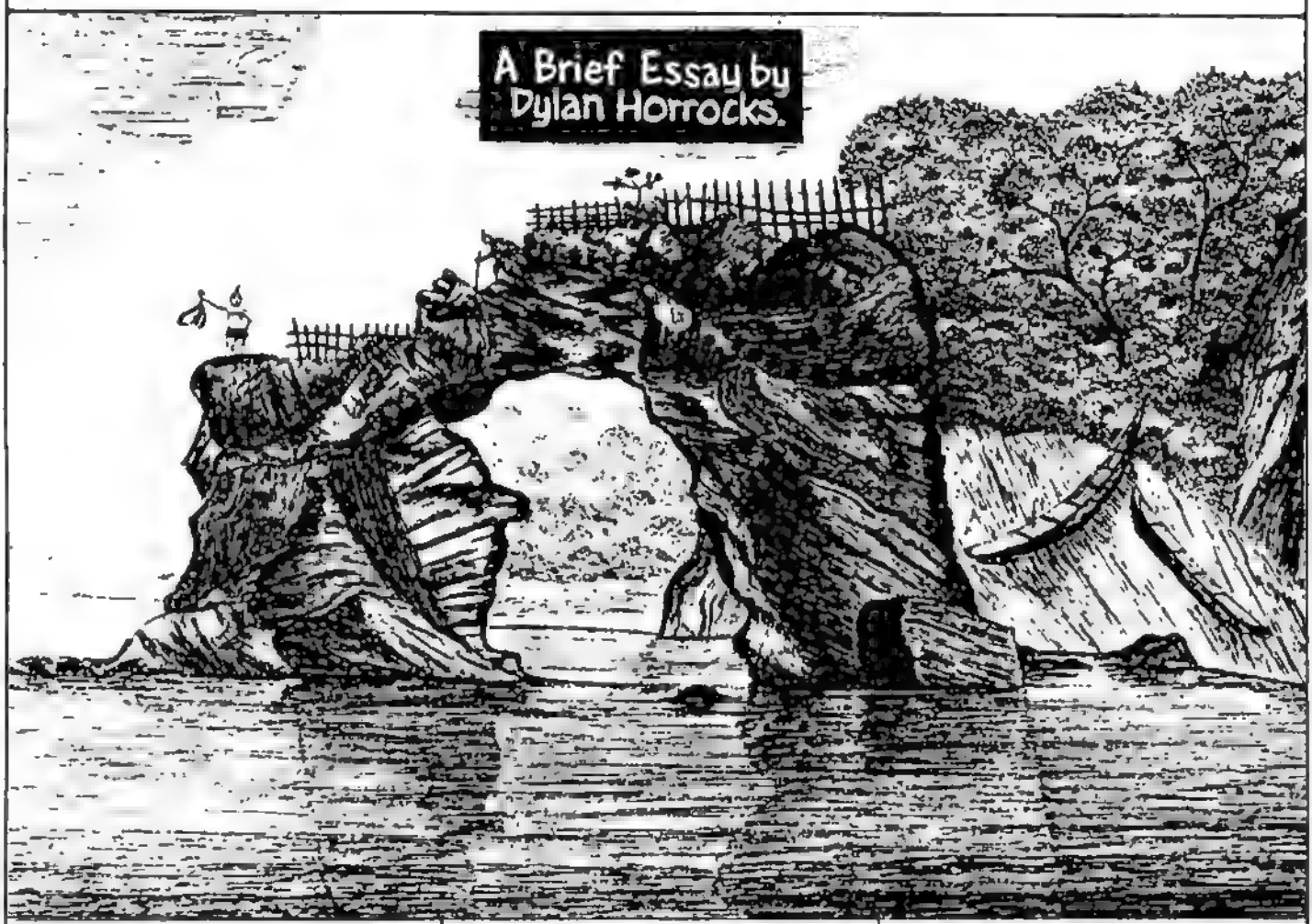
CAPTAIN COOK'S

Comic Cuts.

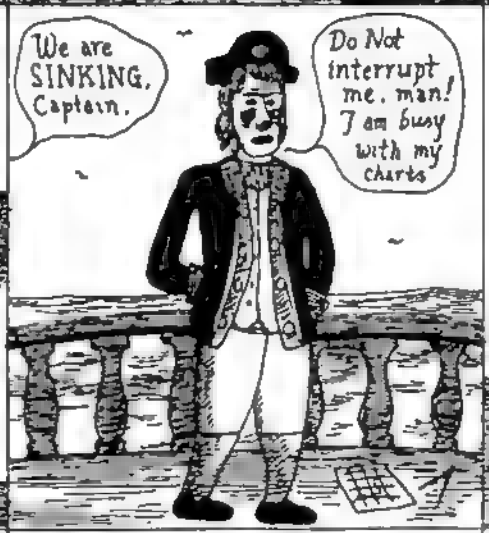
Nº 1.
December 1st
1771.

Price
12ˢ Plain.
1/- Colᵈ

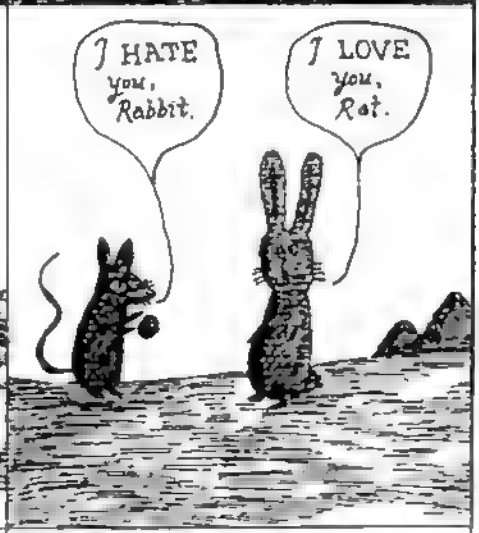
A Brief Essay by Dylan Horrocks.



DOCTOR BLATHER.



CAPTAIN BLOW.



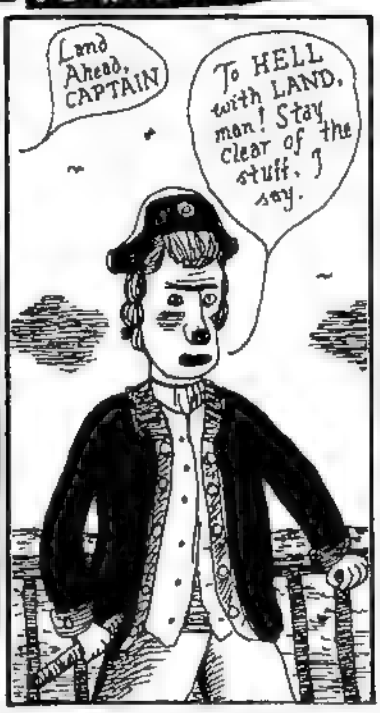
RAT AND RABBIT.

CAPTAIN JAMES COOK, R.N. (1728-1779) is famous for his voyages of discovery in 1768-71, 1772-75, and 1776-80, during which he charted much of the Pacific Ocean - from Alaska to the icy waters of the Antarctic. But few people know of Cook's second - but no less distinguished - career as a cartoonist.

BORN at Marton, Yorkshire, Cook was the son of a Scots-born farm-hand. By the age of 18 Cook was at sea, aboard a Whitby Collier *The Freelove*. At this time he began cartooning, producing a series of caricatures of real and imagined sailing types; later collected and published by Cook's widow in 1782 as *The FREELOVE FUNNIES*.

(*Above*) Cook in 1776, engraved after Webber.

IN 1755 Cook entered the British Navy. After distinguished service in the War with France in Quebec, and later in Newfoundland, he had, by 1767, gained a reputation as the best cartographer in the Navy. He had also begun featuring recurring characters in his cartoons, most notably the blunt and laconic *CAPTAIN BLOW* (a thinly disguised self-parody).



(*Left*) A 'Captain Blow' cartoon drawn in 1763 in London soon after the birth of Cook's first son, James.

COOK'S cartoons during this period were published only very rarely - some accompanied his charts in the *NORTH AMERICAN PILOT* - but they proved popular with his crews (though not always with his superiors), a factor which aided him in later years in maintaining discipline during the long exploratory voyages.

THE first of these voyages left England in 1768, and took Cook to Australia and New Zealand, which he charted with great accuracy, disproving the lingering myth of a huge Southern Continent. Cook fulfilled his mission with such success that the Navy quickly sent him on another; of the final decade of his life, barely two years were spent at home in England. These epic voyages did, however, provide Cook with a wealth of material for his cartoons: exotic landscapes, cultures and species, and - of course - the eccentricities of his ship-mates, particularly the natural historians

and scientists who accompanied each voyage. One of these – Joseph Banks – became the unwitting model for the pompous 'DOCTOR BLATHER', who features in a number of Cook's cartoons after 1768, and who may have partly inspired Thomas Rowlandson's *Doctor Syntax* character. A few of Cook's companions were persuaded by him to try cartooning themselves, notably the Swedish botanist Dr. Daniel Carl Solander, the painter William Hodges (*Pictured Right*), and Sydney Parkinson, the natural history draughtsman who died during the return leg of the first voyage, leaving a mere half dozen cartoons by which to judge a potential cruelly cut down by illness.

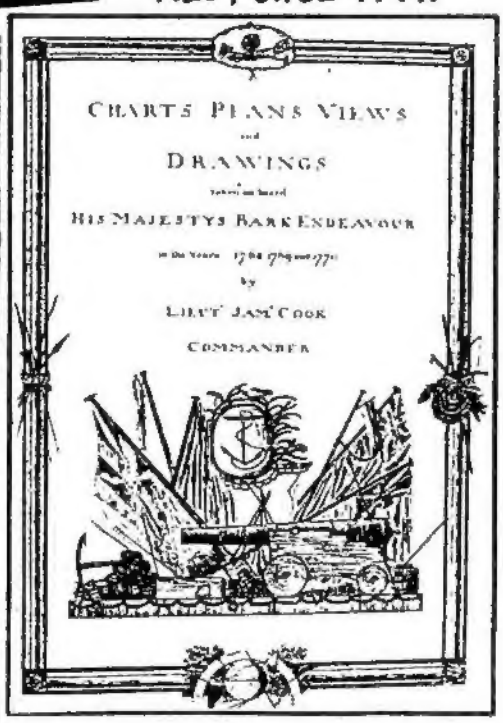
(*Below*) Dr. Blather, in a typical pose (1772).

(*Below*) A cartoon by Sydney Parkinson, published in the first edition of *CAPTAIN COOK'S COMIC CUTS*.

IT WAS during these long voyages that Cook first began illustrating his journals with long sequences of panels describing humorous events – both real and imaginary. Often these involved his growing cast of characters: Captain *Blow*, *Dr. Blather*, and two anthropomorphic characters *RABBIT* and *RAT*. By telling his stories with a series of pictures supported only by speech balloons, Cook invented the modern comic strip, decades before Rodolphe Töpffer's picture stories, and more than a century before American newspaper strips.

(*Above*) Rabbit and Rat, circa 1771.

WHEN Cook returned to England after the 1768-1771 voyage, he issued an edition of drawings and maps under the title *CHARTS, PLANS, VIEWS and DRAWINGS* (*Pictured Right*). The 'drawings' included a number of cartoons, which – to Cook's surprise – proved rather popular; sufficiently so that he was persuaded by Banks to publish a further collection, containing only cartoons by Cook and his fellow explorers. And so *CAPTAIN COOK'S COMIC CUTS* was born – an irregular collection of cartoons and strips which never gained the wide readership enjoyed by the satirical sheets of the nineteenth century, but which had an enormous influence on cartoonists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, proving to be well ahead of its time, and introducing innovations not popularised until more than a hundred years later.



IN all, only six editions of *CAPTAIN COOK'S COMIC CUTS* were published over the following nine years, their erratic schedule determined by Cook's long absences from England. Their unusual format and price (8 to 24-page booklets, sold for between 12 shillings and a guinea plain, and even more coloured) were enough to prohibit a larger audience and subsequently to ensure that few copies have survived to our day. But the inventiveness of their contents had a significant impact on the handful of early cartoonists who saw them, including Thomas Rowlandson (1757-1827) and James Gillray (1757-1815), and helped to inspire the fashion for 'strips' between 1784 and 1794. Cook was never a skilled draughtsman, but throughout the 1770's it was his innovative pamphlets which set the pace.

I suspect they believe you to be a God, Doctor.
Then these natives seem a good deal more intelligent than I had hitherto believed.

AFTER Cook was killed in Hawaii in 1779, Hodges prepared a final edition of the *COMIC CUTS*, consisting of work drawn by Cook during his final voyage, and also cartoons and written tributes to the man who had redefined the cartoon by Solander, Banks, Hodges, and the young Thomas Rowlandson, who wrote:

> "Cook was a man unafraid to face the boundaries of our knowledge and then to assault them, with all the fearlessness and invention that the English soul has ever possessed. And in so doing, he was ever charting new territory - whether the richly soil'd lands he explored across the sea, or the richer territory of the mind and of the spirit: the world of that endeavour, that Art, which he made his own."

AND Samuel Johnson (so his faithful biographer records) resolved the two sides of James Cook thus:

> "Garrick here has been saying how curious it seems that the same refined sensibility which produces those scandalously witty Rabbit cartoons could in the next instant order a man flogged for not eating enough sauerkraut. On the contrary, I for one can imagine nothing more in keeping with the sensibility of a satirist. Cook sees quite rightly that there is no use in treading delicately over so grave a matter as sauerkraut."

Dylan Horrocks is currently compiling a collection of work by little-known innovative cartoonists, including Cook, Katherine Mansfield, and Julius Vogel.

Dear Mrs. Hicks... (from page 22)

P.S. I played an accordion the other day — I'm sure Jen "Pez Girl" McCabe would have approved.

Lars Cawley
Wellington, New Zealand

Lars is the author of a marvellous mini-comic called Rocks, *which can be ordered for NZ $2.00 from Pickle's P.O. Box.*

Here are two entries in the "Name Your Favourite New Zealand Prime Minister" competition. More entries and the announcement of the winner next issue.

My favourite N.Z. P.M. was Mr. Lange. He was quite fat. He stood up to the U.S. on Nukes and got New Zealand kicked out of ANZUS. Good show, Mr. Lange!

Robert Boyd,
Portland, OR.

Lawrencia of East Anglia (born Lower Hutt, 1899). PM of NZ 1932-1934. Lawrencia was immersed in medieval literature by her great aunty Nora, and in 1924 set out for the region of England after which she is now named, there to organise the local resistance to the High Modernist oppressors and blow upthe occasional train. She can, and does, recite *Troilus and Criseyde* at a drop of the wind.

Bernard Caleo,
Melbourne, Australia

THE Hicksville Hit Parade

Since I'm doing the honours this issue, I may as well tell you about a few of my favourite cartoonists.

Top of the Harry Pops is Ed Pinsent, the presiding master of mini-comics, kind of Philip Larkin meets Jean de Brunhoff. A true poet. One of his many masterpieces is Illegal Batman. *For this and others, write to him at: 43 Finsen Road, London SE5 9AW, England.*

Also worth hunting out are the rare but beautiful strips of Glenn Dakin. Don't bother with his current day job (writing superhero comics for Marvel UK), but try to find his more personal work in minis, Escape, Fox *and* Gag *back-issues and some of Eddie Campbell's anthologies. Otherwise, try his* Temptation, *a light homage to George Herriman, published by Penguin Books in 1991 (ISBN 0140154787).*

Chris Reynolds also has a book on Penguin's list: Mauretania *(ISBN 0140131841). It's a treat, as is the comic of the same name which he self-publishes along with a few other talented cartoonists, available from: 221A Kilburn Lane, London W104BQ, England.*

Eddie Campbell has now managed to become almost famous, of course, what with Alan Moore's From Hell *and his own* Deadface *and* Bacchus *series from Dark Horse. But I'm fondest of his earlier* Alec *stories, collected by Eclipse in 1990 (ISBN 1560600470).*

Carol Swain's Way Out Strips *[background image] (now published by Fantagraphics) is another gem to have come out of the British small press.*

There are many more, of course, and the best way to find them is to order Zum! the Small Press Comix Directory and Magazine *for £5.00 (3-issue subscription) from: (4) 10 Mannering Road, Liverpool L17 8TR, England.*

Happy posting! — Harry.

Inside:
Tisco on the beach
Hate.
Love.
Also in this issue:
Captain Cook's Comic Cuts -
-With rare Eighteenth Century Comics!-